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## The Maine Farmer

N. T. WHITING,  
S. BOARDMAN, Editors.Our Home, Our Country, and our Brother Man  
Chemistry by the Fireside.—No. 16.

CARBONIC ACID.

We told you last week that charcoal, mineral coal, and the diamond, were the same thing under different forms, and that we give them all the name of carbon. Suppose now we burn a piece of charcoal; during the process of burning, the oxygen of the air combines with the carbon and it passes off in the form of a gas, to which we give the name of carbonic acid. If we burn a diamond in oxygen gas the result is the same. This is the proof that the diamond is pure carbon. It was first discovered by Dr. Black in 1757, and called by him *fixed air*, because it was found to exist in a fixed or solid state in limestone.

You can easily prepare carbonic acid. Put some chalk, which is composed of carbonic acid and lime, into a glass jar, and pour on some diluted sulphuric acid. Effervescence immediately takes place by the escape of the carbonic acid from the chalk in the form of a gas. As the gas is one and a half times heavier than common air, it remains in the jar. It is invisible, but has a pungent odor, such as you may smell after burning charcoal. Under an immense pressure it is condensed into a liquid, and when the pressure is removed it will evaporate so rapidly that it freezes its own vapor so as to produce a white substance looking like the purest snow. Owing to its weight you cannot pour it from one vessel into another like water, though you can see it. Take a tumbler and set a short bit of lighted candle in the bottom, and pour some of the gas from the jar, and it will put out the light as suddenly as if it had been water. A test for carbonic acid is lime water, which, on agitation, produces a milky looking substance. Lime then has a great affinity for carbonic acid, and forms a carbamate of lime. This is the composition of all our limestone and marble. It is found in all natural waters. If you boil water over the carbonic acid and the water tastes flat and insipid. Your soda water, sparkling cider, beer, and wines owe their character chiefly to carbonic acid.

Carbonic acid is a deadly poison when breathed. If you should put a kettle of burning charcoal in your tight sleeping apartment when you go to bed you would be found dead in your bed in the morning. Sometimes it exists in the bottoms of wells that have not been dug, especially in limestone countries. A case of this kind occurred a few years since in the town of Alexander in this State, when a man descended a well and fell dead. Another descended to rescue him, but he too fell dead. A third was with difficulty saved. A few buckets of water thrown into a well will prevent any such a catastrophe. Every time you pour out a quantity of air from your lungs, you throw with it a quantity of carbonic acid. Just make some fresh lime water, and blow into it through a tube or tobacco pipe, and it will become white from the carbonic acid which you have blown into it.

Plants breathe carbonic acid instead of oxygen. Despite a plant of carbonic acid and it would sicken and die. Over the surface of leaves are countless numbers of pores or open mouths which take in the carbonic acid. Thus the leaves of plants are like the lungs of animals. It escapes whenever decomposition takes place and whenever bodies are decomposed. Such are some of the properties of carbonic acid—a substance deadly poisonous when breathed, yet absolutely necessary for our very existence.

### A Short Visit in Somerset County.

A week or two ago, desiring a little relaxation from the somewhat irksome duties of the "sanctum editorial," we left office and cares behind, and set out upon a short tour, partly for the purpose of visiting dear friends, and partly of going among the farmers in order to receive good suggestions from them—which we never fail of receiving from intelligent, practical men, even during a short conversation—and of getting our own ideas, grown somewhat rusty by continued self-application, sharpened by contact with the fresh and vigorous thoughts of working men. The pleasure we received from this visit, and the kind expressions of all we met, is compensation enough for weeks and weeks of the quiet but tiresome routine of office life.

Our route was through the towns of Field, Skowhegan, Norridgewock, Madison, Anson and Embden, which rank among the very best farming towns in Somerset county, and as good as any in the State, where all the farmers are prosperous and intelligent, and where the *Maine Farmer* has a larger circulation than in any part of Maine outside of our own country. Fairfield is one of the largest towns in the State, has a strong, productive soil, is excellent for grazing pastures, and raises some of the best working oxen, and other neat stock in the county. The soil is well adapted for orcharding, and in years past the farmers manufactured large quantities of cider—indeed, the trees have been grafted with the improved sorts of winter fruits, and, with the exception of last year, produced large crops of apples, which find a ready market at high prices, thus orcharding is now one of the most profitable branches of husbandry in the town. Entering Norridgewock, we enter the "Menno-District" of Somerset county, which district comprises all the remaining towns above named, and perhaps New Portland, Shirley, Athens and Saco. In our volume for 1862 (Vol. 37) we gave an extended account of a visit among the sheep farmers of this section, detailing the history of importation, management, &c., of the flocks of some of the most intelligent and judicious breeders in Norridgewock, Anson, &c., and deem it unnecessary to again refer to them, any more than to say that the flocks visited of late showed a marked improvement over those of three years ago, and give evidence that the same skill and attention in breeding, and the good care in management are being pursued with energy, and with excellent results.

On our recent visit we extended our tour somewhat further than in 1862, and called upon Mr. T. H. Spaulding, of North Anson, who has a good flock of one hundred and twenty-two sheep and lambs. Although not showing so much Merino blood as most flocks in this town, Mr. Spaulding's sheep look remarkably active and healthy, and their last clip averaged something over four pounds per head. They are kept in the basement or cellar of the barn, which is 35 by 40 feet, well provided with racks, salt boxes, &c. Mr. Spaulding feeds his flock three times a day, giving each ewe and lamb hay twice, and good English hay once. As a preventer he gives his entire flock eight quarts of corn meal in the morning and a bushel of potash, cut at night. With such feed sheep are kept in excellent condition.

In conversation with Mr. Spaulding, he stated that his method of using sheep-manure—which many farmers find some difficulty in applying to the best advantage—was to let it remain until fall, then eat it out, fork it over three times, mixing in mud—of which his farm stands a good supply—and applying it to cover the next spring. He should proceed another step further: prepare his land for corn in the fall, ap-

### Coal Tar as a Roofing Material.

Together with much that is ludicrous and absurd, and not a few capital advertisements, the reports of the weekly meetings of the American Institute Farmers Club, often contain much that is really valuable, because practical and sensible. We copy the following from an account of one of its recent meetings, not in any way endorsing its statements, but because it touches upon a matter recently discussed in our columns:

"A letter was read from Joseph Park, Huron, Ohio, asking information about the application of coal-tar to a roof of sawed white-wood shingles:

Mr. Todd.—I once covered a roof with sawed basswood shingles, and I believe it to be a good roof.

The tar penetrated all the joints, and made the cross-grained shingles prove almost as good as the straight. But the water from such a roof is unfit for stock, and causes pollution.

Sold Robinson.—If you will cover his roof with plastic slate the water will be perfectly good, and the roof worth more than a dozen sawed shingle ones.

The plastic part of the tar evaporates and a perfect coat of slate is formed over the wood, and cost only \$10. The Plastic Slate Co. advertises to cover for \$10 per square. After your roof is boarded they put on roof-façade, and cover with the slate. It is semicircular, but firm and provides a good roof.

Look at the roof of the positive qualities it lives in the life and condition of these young men daily, and as their future lives will be. The great majority of them now live in houses of actual labor. They are the sons of working men. They were bred to work, and are fit to work. They are fit to work, and ought to continue to be hard workers, during at least the early part of their manhood, until by prospersity, industry, they can come to be directors of other men's labor, and then still shall they be the leaders of their brothers. But every one of these young men has a future—every one of them (not involved in indolence or vice) has hopeful and just aspirations to improve his condition—every one of them has an assurance of success, and every one of them has a desire to help himself, and his wife and his wife and his wife will be recognized by every sensible man and woman of whatever parentage, in all the community, of every part of the State.

In our community, for the necessities of the case, as well as for the sake of the general welfare of our young men, that we are drawn for almost every kind of public service, and to fill an indefinite variety of useful and honorable stations. They are hand workers now, and most of them will continue to be, for various reasons, and in various ways. But as they grow up, they will be town officers, selectmen, town treasurers, highway surveyors—they will be jurors and sheriffs and county commissioners—they will be representatives and senators, and members of a majority of the Legislature, and every man, in the course of his life, will be the controlling strength and influence in any town. In the course of his life, the first plant, selected as a fair sample, was husked on the ground, and seven out of every ten (according to my doubtful good fortune) will go to Congress. If we cannot, in the State of Maine, say that any rich man, while still belonging to the industrial classes, has been made Governor of the State, yet certainly, most honest and upright men, who have been born and brought up in New England, though they may go into no public station whatever, yet in their middle and mature life, they will be the controlling strength and influence in any town. In the course of his life, the first plant, selected as a fair sample, was husked on the ground, and seven out of every ten (according to my doubtful good fortune) will go to Congress. If we cannot, in the State of Maine, say that any rich man, while still belonging to the industrial classes, has been made Governor of the State, yet certainly, most honest and upright men, who have been born and brought up in New England, though they may go into no public station whatever, yet in their middle and mature life, they will be the controlling strength and influence in any town. 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# THE MAINE FARMER: AN AGRICULTURAL AND FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

The Maine Farmer.

Augusta, Thursday, March 22, 1866.

TERMS OF THE MAINE FARMER.

\$2.00 in advance; \$5.00 for a week within three months of the date of subscription.

All payments made by subscribers to the Farmer will be creditable in accordance with our usual mailing method.

The printed date upon the paper, in connection with the subscriber's name, will show the time to which he has paid, and will constitute, in all cases, a valid receipt for money remitted by him.

Any subscriber desiring to change the post office direction of his paper must communicate to us the name of the office to which it has previously been sent, otherwise we shall be unable to comply with his request.

NOTICES.

Mr. Jas. Stevens will call upon subscribers in Somerset County during the month of March.

Mr. S. G. French, will call on a collecting and canvassing tour in Kennebec County, East side.

Mr. V. Darland and Sam'l. P. Cate, will visit subscribers in Cumberland County during the months of March and April.

OUR HOME.

This is the first part of our paper's motto. Its name is always sweet. It is the chain that binds the members together.

Years of separation, years of toil, of honor and fame do not prevent us from making a pilgrimage to the home of our youth. The young couple who have commenced life on their own account, will long after they have made a home of their own, years to visit the home of their youth. Instinctively they talk about going home as long as the parents have a home. The grandchildren are sent to the parents' home, where the reflex influence of grandchildren on grandparents is felt.

We have often felt the power of that influence on our own mind. Though the home of our youth was long since burned down, though parents still remain in their graves, yet we do not fail to visit the spot where we first saw the light—where we helped to clear the farm, and played by the brook, or caught its little fish, or climbed the neighboring hills, we hardly know why. How many a young man wanders away from home, buffeted about the world, and then turns his footsteps back to the home of his youth, as that was the spot above all others, which would afford him happiness.

It has been one of our leading ideas in conducting the FARMER to render home comfortable and attractive. Life is not made up of dollars and cents. There is such a thing as rendering home more convenient, more comfortable, and more attractive every year. We were pleased with the remark of a man who once said that his income was above hundred dollars a year. He paid two hundred dollars towards his home, and expended one hundred dollars a year in the improvement of his home. That man has an elegant home now.

The small and the fishes have no fixed home. They have but few of the attributes of man. They crawl and swim about in search of food. They belong to the lowest orders of animals. Some of the highest orders make for themselves a home. The fox burrows in the ground. The deer and the moose have their favorite spots to which they repair in winter. The bear seeks a cave where he sleeps during winter, and thawing out in spring, he leaves his den, caring no more for a place of shelter till the succeeding winter. Man has higher instincts. The domestic relations, the perpetual love of children, the powers of language and social intercourse, the union of man and wife till death, are peculiar to man, and are all promoted and strengthened by the character of our homes. Thus the dying saint takes of going home as if the last act of life was but a repetition of his feelings in his earlier years. Let us then strive to make our homes the sacred spots to which we shall repair and enjoy the true sweets of life. Let nothing stand in the way of our devotion to the wants of our household, so that our declining years come along unbidden by us, we may have the consciousness of knowing that we have done our duty to those around us the happier by our living in this world.

FIRE INSURANCE. But few persons are aware of the amount of capital invested in this country in fire insurance, and of the amount paid for losses, and of the amount of taxes and expenses paid by the numerous companies in the United States. Fire insurance has rapidly become a science. The best companies in the land base their business on a reliable foundation, so that they are among the most permanent institutions in the land. The amount paid for losses in this country is immense. During five years past, the New York insurance companies have paid for losses over fifty millions of dollars, and this is only a part of what has been done elsewhere. The Home Insurance of New Haven paid the last year over three hundred thousand dollars for losses, without interrupting its business. We mention this as an example. Other flourishing companies may have paid more. Many persons distrust insurance companies. Insure in a first class company, and you are safe. We think no farmer should have his buildings uninsured. He knows not but the labor of his life may be swept away in an hour. Have something invested to fall back upon in case of misfortune. Seek not a cheap company, but a good one, and it will be a safe investment. A movement is now making among the principal companies to petition Congress to render the system more uniform throughout the country. Every facility should be furnished companies for carrying on their business so as to secure its benefits to every holder of property in the land.

THE PROVISIONAL TRADE BILL. In our Congressional summary last week we gave the action of the House on the bill regulating trade with the British Provinces. The bill was killed on the motion of Mr. Blaine. The bill was introduced by the British Government. It was voted to be introduced at the discretion of the President, or, in other words, the Treasury Department. Mr. Blaine maintained that all the interests involved were far better protected in the present general tariff than in the specific bill proposed, and that there was no reason why we should make any discrimination in favor of the British Provinces as compared with other foreign countries. The bill is dead beyond all hope of revival. The general tariff now in operation will apply to all Provincial products after the 17th inst.

CATTLE DISEASES. Some apprehension having been excited by reports respecting a disease among cattle in Pennsylvania, the "Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture," had the subject under discussion at their last meeting. As to the "Binderperd," they assert that no authenticated case of it has as yet occurred on this continent. There are now and have been cases of pleuro-pneumonia among cattle, but not of sufficient importance to cause the slightest apprehension, even in the counties where they occurred.

THE RINDERPEST. The U. S. Consul at Liverpool informs the State Department that the rinderpest disease is still on the increase. No remedy has yet been found that meets with any general confidence, although there are several that promise well. The official report for the week ending Feb. 17th, states the number of new cases to be 13,001. This is an increase of 2187 over the number reported last week, and 3848 over the number reported as having been attacked week before last.

FAIRFIELD TOWN MEETING. The following officers were chosen: Moderator, A. C. Chase; Town Clerk, A. G. Underwood; F. F. Pike, F. A. Chase, A. G. French, Selectmen, Assessors and Overseers of the Poor; S. Gile, Collector and Treasurer; A. G. French, G. Underwood and A. F. Watson, Superintendents School Committee.

"WE learn that there is a deep religious interest manifested in many towns in the eastern section of the State. In Blue Hill the recent hopeful conversions number about one hundred and forty. Very favorable indications exist for a continuance of the good work of religious reformation."

ARMISTICE OF THE GUERRILLA QUARRELL. A man answering the description of Quarrell, the leader of the Lawrence, Kansas, messenger, was arrested in New York on Saturday night, and sent to Washington. It is said that several citizens of Kansas, including Senators Lane and Pomeroy, have visited him, and are of the opinion that he is the identical individual.

## Adjourned Meeting of the City Council.

AUGUSTA, March 17, 1866.

Roll of Accounts, No. 18, amounting in the aggregate to the sum of \$400,68, was presented, and payment ordered.

Report of the Committee on New Streets, to whom was referred the petition of G. W. Ricker and others, for a new Street from Oak Street, running northward to Winthrop Street, was accepted and the Street established as laid out; also report of same Committee to whom was referred the petition of L. M. Morris and others to widen Water Street on the east side, was accepted and referred to the next City Council.

Reports of City Treasurer, Street Commissioners, Chief Engineer of Fire Department, City and Superintending School Committee were referred to next City Council.

The Mayor was authorized to transfer the balance of all appropriations undrawn and not required to pay outstanding bills, to other appropriations which may be overdrawn for the purpose of balancing the accounts.

The monthly report of the City Marshal was read and accepted.

Board of Aldermen passed the following resolution:

Resolved, That the thanks of this Board be tendered to His Honor the Mayor for the able, urban and impartial manner in which he has presided over the affairs of the city, and his skill and tact in all our last meeting at which His Honor will present his annual report to the citizens of Augusta, appointed April 17, 1866, to vote thereon.

For the Maine Farmer.

Labor-Saving Machinery.

MISSES, EDITORS.—The MAINE FARMER has always been the advocate of the use of labor-saving machinery upon the farm. Permit us now to make a few suggestions to farmers relative to the purchase of the same. In the first place, the farmer should not wait until he wants to use a machine before he engages or purchases it. Second, he should always secure, if possible, a machine which is durable, and not likely to get out of order. In no class of machines do the above remarks apply with more force than to mowing machines. It often happens that farmers are induced to purchase some new and untried machine, or one which has not been properly constructed, or in which improper material and poor stock has been used, impeding perhaps by a lower price, or by some fancied superiority, yet how often do they have reason to regret their choice, when in the midst of having their machines break down, and damage and defeat what otherwise might have been a successful gathering of the hay crop. Our advice is, to make a choice of machine before the excitement and hurry of harvest comes, and we will add that as years pass, we now have full confidence in the Union Mower. Its value has been unequalled. Gov. C. A. M. informed us that the machine used at Bowdoin College, was a success, and that it was a great saving to the college.

The Union Mower that I purchased of you last July, proved itself a first class machine. My man cut out of order nor cost a cent to repair the whole season, and when taken out of the field, was in a good condition as on the first day of use. It is ready to use again, and is a great saving to the college.

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